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VERSES TO ORDER

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VERSES TO ORDER.

VERSES TO ORDER.

BY

A. G.

Methuen & Co.
18, BURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.
1892.

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ANV2645

Most of the verses in this volume have appeared in the *Oxford Magazine.*

PRAEFATIO.

Ne propera, Lector, Musam damnare localem,
carmina quod medio non canat apta foro:
namque Academiae non sunt generalia curae,
res nobis nostrae nostraque verba placent:
EDITOR exagitat vates cessare volentes,
inserit et chartis nonnisi nota suis.
est proprium vitium si quid peccavimus arte:
rem male si quando legimus, est populi.

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VERSES TO ORDER.

A LAMENT.

OXFORD! o'er your history's pages
  Gloomy is the retrospect;
For in spite of warning sages
  Still your faults you can't correct.

Here—for instance—Thorold Rogers
  Tells you (and I fear it's true)
How Professors (artful dodgers)
  Cut their work, yet draw their "screw;"

How the Reader conscientious,
  Solitary as a nun,
Reads, alas! to empty benches,
  Or, at most, a class of one:

How insulted Alma Mater's
  Eye with sorrow still remarks
Twins in neat perambulators
  Circumambulate the Parks.

* * * *

But the House of Convocation—
  Evils worse than these deface it:
There each liberal aspiration
  Sinks beneath a cold Non Placet:

There, Historians' claims defying,
  Law's appeal you still resist,
Even now but half complying
  With th' "Unlettered Physicist."

Still a brace of arrant Tories
  You on Parliament bestow:
Where—O Tempora, O Mores!
  As we read in Cicero—
O Magistri et Doctores,
  Where do you expect to go?

CARMEN GUALTERI MAP EX AUL. NOV. HOSP.

Otiosus homo sum: cano laudes oti:
Qui laborem cupiunt procul sint remoti:
Ipse sum adversus huic rationi toti:
Pariter insaniunt ac si essent poti.

Diligens arundinis lucidique solis,
Aciem quod ingeni acuis et polis,
Salve dium Otium, inimicum scholis
Atque rebus omnibus quae sunt magnae molis!

Nota discunt alii remigandi iura,
Qua premendus arte sit venter inter crura:
Haec est vitae ratio longe nimis dura:
Nulla nobis cutis est deterendae cura.

Habitu levissimo magna pars induto
Pellunt pilas pedibus, concidunt in luto:
Hos, si potest fieri, stultiores puto
Atque tantum similes animali bruto.

Alius contrariis usus disciplinis
Procul rivo vivit et Torpidorum vinis:
Nullus unquam ponitur huic legendi finis:
Vescitur radicibus Graecis et Latinis:

Mihi cum ut subeam Moderationes
Tutor suadet anxius "Frustra" inquam "mones:
Per me licet ignibus universas dones
Aeschyli palmarias emendationes!"

Ego insanissimos reor insanorum
Mane tempus esse qui dictitent laborum:
Otium est optimum omnium bonorum:
Ante diem medium non relinquo torum.

Ergo iam donabimus hoc praeceptum gratis
Vobis membris omnibus Universitatis,
Dominis Doctoribus, Undergraduatis—
PROFESSORES CVRA SIT OMNES VT FIATIS.

FRÜHLINGSLIED.

Now in the boughs the throstle sings,
Abroad the lambkins skip:
Now every morn a "Leaflet" brings
And every eve a Whip:
Their finny victims anglers seek
In each pellucid pool:
And Convocation once a week
Invents a Final School.

Whene'er I walk about the town
Some specialist I view:
They bid me vote for tongues unknown,
For Readers strange and new:
But ah! debarred from arts like theirs
By Fate's unjust decrees,
I cannot prate of ancient Erse
Or modern Japanese.

The sun shines fair on Charsley's Hall,
As Scott (I think) remarks:
I hear the sound of bat and ball
Proceeding from the Parks:
My friend,—although the views we share
Materially agree,—
Voters, like birds, in springtime pair:
Then pair, O pair with me!

OUT OF WORK.

He said,—and shed some natural tears,—
A College Tutor old and gray,
"'Twas ever thus! from childhood's years
I still have known the Council's way.
I never loved an Honour School,
Or conned its course with studious glee,
But Convocation's changeful rule
Decreed that School must cease to be!

Farewell to all I counted dear,
My Latin Prose, my Virgil lectures,
The audiences that thronged to hear
My (often palmary) conjectures:—
Farewell, my famed Remarks on Jelf,
My celebrated Note on γοῦν;
Go, moulder idly on the shelf,
Demosthenes upon the Crown!

For this I've burnt the midnight oil
In getting up the frequent tip,
For this, with long nocturnal toil,
I've served the Cause of Scholarship,—
That I my Furneaux and my Jebb
Must change for History's doubtful dates,
And teach, or starve, th' evasive neb-
ulosities of Honour Greats.

I'll seek some more congenial clime
  Where Prose and Verse the mind engage;
Philosophies of Space and Time
  Can ne'er console my vacant age!"
With lip of scorn he packed his "Mayor,"
  His notebooks grasped with brow of choler:
Then took the train for Cambridge—where
  'Tis said they still respect a Scholar.

A SONG OF DEGREES.

THERE'S reality, then,
In what rumours allege,
And the Council again
Are assaying the edge
Of their ancient and dangerous weapon—once more the
Thin End of the Wedge.

They've a scheme to propose
(On the plan "Do ut des")
Which will multiply those
Who proceed to Degrees:—
You may get your M.A. from the Bursar, on sending
the requisite fees!

We, who still have defied
The Hebdomadal's nods,
Who have fought and have died
(So to speak) against odds,
Who have grappled with Letto-Slavonic, and pulverised
History Mods—

Thus to tout for M.A.'s
Is a thing we detest:
'Twere a standing disgrace
If we e'er acquiesced
In a change that is simply and solely designed to
replenish the Chest.

If Degrees don't come in
As they used long ago,
And it's found that the tin
In the Cashbox is low,—
Let them sell the Museum to Keble—abolish a Reader or so:

Let them lurk in the Corn
After Union debates:
Let them prowl until morn
By the Theatre's gates:
Let them proctorise golfers from Cowley, and men coming up from the Eights.

But your scout (as you see)
If you simply go down
And receive your Degree
In the Highlands—in Town—
Cannot wait at the Apodyterium, and be tipped for presenting your gown.

Pause, O Vice, for a while,
And reflect, if you can,
How the system must rile
That respectable man,
When he finds his legitimate profits reduced by your Radical plan.

Do I sleep? Do I dream?
No, I fear there's no doubt
Of the truth of the scheme
That the Council's about:
To enrich an effete institution they risk the receipts of the scout!

TO OUR CRITIC. (1892.)

GREAT Mr. Collins, reformer of Colleges!
Though we admit we have grievously erred,
Hear our excuses, our pleas and apologies—
Do not, O do not condemn us unheard!

True, we acknowledge our various deficiencies,
Laggards delaying the march of the time;
True that the tale of our crimes and omissions is
Too long by far for recounting in rhyme:

Still there are some you should really think better of,
Some who may 'scape from your critical ban:
Have you not read the remarkable letter of
Nettlesh-p, Bywat-r, P-lham, M-can?

If there are faults that you cannot abear in us,
Stamping our lives with indelible shame,
All is the fault of the Council's contrariness:
They and not we are the persons to blame:

They and not we who refuse the admission of
Subjects unknown in our ancestors' days:
They and not we who reject the petition of
More than a hundred enlightened M.A.'s!

Yes—and suppose that the Council were willing to
Open its mind to a subject that's new,
Still 'tis the fact that we haven't a shilling to
Spend on the studies suggested by you.

Grant, that our authors from Morris to Malory
Languish untaught on their several shelves:
Grant, that for want of a Reader (with salary)
Students are forced to read Keats for themselves:

Think of the claims of the Natural Sciences,
All of them rolling their separate logs:
Think of the millions we spend on appliances,
Chemists and Botanists, rabbits and frogs!

Here an excuse for our absence of progress is,
Here is a plea for the sloth you deplore—
Science's ravenous maw (like an ogress's)
Takes what we give her and clamours for more.

Hear our excuses, our pleas and apologies,
Great Mr. Collins, dissatisfied man!
Fully the bard your indictment acknowledges—
Still we are doing the best that we can.

WHAT IS IT?

"A new movement has been arranged, and will shortly take place."
—*Statement in the "Oxford Magazine."*

SIR,

O what do you mean, in last week's *Magazine*, with your highly alarming suggestion?
Do speak plainly for once (I confess I'm a dunce), and reply to a pertinent question.
Can it really be true there's a Movement in view? then give to your terrified reader
Some idea, if you can, of its object and plan, and the name and address of its leader!

Why, I thought on the day when I sped to obey the Conservative summons to muster,
And submissively wrote (as instructed) my vote for the excellent P—t of W—t—r,
That the vote which I gave was intended to save from the arts of a Radical faction—
We had weathered the storm, as I hoped, of Reform, and embarked on the stream of Reaction.

But alas! for once more we must hie to the door where Eloquence woos us to slumber,
And the Leaflet and Whip will diurnally drip on the tables they used to encumber:
We must listen again to those eminent men, whose speeches sonorous and splendid
Were so often the cause of repealing the laws which those great rhetoricians defended.

Are they at it anew, the beneficent crew who would
break with traditions that warp us?
Do the Somerville Dons wish to confiscate John's, or
annex the endowments of Corpus?
Or the Scientists want an additional grant, and have
banded their ranks with Philology's,
And they all do their best to extract from the Chest
what the Chest has to wring from the Colleges:

There's the Radical clique who are hostile to Greek, and
for Latin would substitute German,
Who call fees an abuse, and who can't see the use of the
'Varsity afternoon sermon;
There's the person who looks with contempt on his books
as of ignorance merely the causes,
And who everywhere states that distinction in Greats is
for knowledge of classical vases—

Do be serious, and say to a timid M.A. what this new
and destructive device is
(There are times when a jest is misplaced, at the best,
and we stand on the Brink of a Crisis):
Just mention the foes whom I have to oppose, and the
troops of Reform that are arming,
But refrain, if you please, from suggestions like these,
which are simply and solely alarming!

TRUTH AT LAST.

LITERARY compositions (thus I heard a Tutor say)
Have, as mediums of instruction, altogether had their day:
Be not like our rude forefathers, who their pupils' minds perplexed
With their futile speculation on the meaning of the text.

In their critical editions we completely fail to trace
That contempt of ancient authors which is Learning's surest base;
Any lies of any writers—Homer, Plutarch, Livy, Demosthenes or Aristotle—all were good enough for *them.*

Mere exactitude linguistic simply serves to hide the truth:
Grammar's but a dull convention meant to vex the soul of youth:
If you want to Make an Epoch, as a scholar ought to do,
Try the methods advocated in the *Classical Review.*

There they teach how quite misleading is Thucydides' narration
—Save perhaps when illustrated by a recent excavation,—
Prove Herodotus a liar—show conclusively that one
Square half-inch of ancient potsherd's worth the whole of Xenophon.

If you should consult the classics (and at times I think
you must,
Just to show they're persons whom it's quite impossible
to trust),
Do not seek the verbal meaning and the literal sense to
render:
Read them (like the late Macaulay) "with your feet upon
the fender."

This be then your chief endeavour,—not to construe,
parse, or scan,
Not to have the least conception what the aorist means
with ἄν—
But by study of the relics disinterred in various spots
Pans Arcadian to distinguish clearly from Corinthian
pots:

Thus the purest stream of knowledge from the fountain-
head you'll sip:
Thus you'll do a genuine service to the cause of Scholar-
ship:
For by Fact and not by language now the ancient world
we view—
Which was what our rude forefathers altogether failed
to do.

A HANDBOOK TO HOMER.

"We regretted much to see Professor * * * * lending the weight of his brilliant name to the statement that schoolboys ought not to read Homer, because it would corrupt their Greek."—*Note in the "Oxford Magazine."*

Poluphloisboisterous Homer of old
Threw all his augments into the sea,
Although he had often been courteously told
That perfect imperfects begin with an e:
But the Poet replied with a dignified air,
"What the Digamma does any one care?"

Yes—it is true that that singular man
(Whether he's Homer, or somebody else)
Often puts κεν where he should have put ἄν,
Seldom will construe and mostly misspells,
And wholly ignores those grand old laws
Which govern the Attic conditional clause.

This is the author whom innocent boys
Cram for Responsions and grind at for Mods,
Possible Ithacas, mythical Troys,
Scandalous stories of heroes and gods,
Wholly deficient in morals and truth,—
That is the way that we educate Youth!

Even the great Alexandrian clique
  Never attempted to write him anew:
Learning's reformer, Professor of Greek!
  Erudite person! they left it to you.
Now shall we have—'twas a manifest need—
Something that serious scholars can read.

Parents and guardians may surely expect
  Books where the student orthography learns,
Language grammatical, spelling correct,
  Not the vagaries of Chaucer or Burns,—
Syntax and idioms adapted to those
Stated distinctly in Sidgw-ck's Greek Prose:

None of the puzzles that puzzle us now,
  Nothing to hinder disciple or don,
All of his genitives enduring in *ου*,
  All of his ἅπαξ λεγόμενα gone—
Homer conforming to classical rule—
That is the Homer for College and School!

AD GERMANOS.

Ye Germans, whose daring conjectures,
Whose questionings darkly abstruse,
Provide our Professors with lectures,
Our Dons with original views,
I strive to express what we owe you
With wholly inadequate pen:
Too late and too little we know you,
Remarkable men!

Had you lived but two thousand years sooner
Poor Plato had ne'er been perplexed,
No frequent and fatal *lacuna*
Had marred a Thucydides' text:
Nor Pindar had puzzled the guesser,
And ne'er had the public misled,
Had he asked a Teutonic Professor
To write him instead.

Though the facts that you foist on historians
To the regions of fancy belong,
And your dreams of the dates of the Dorians
Are often demonstrably wrong,—
Though your best emendations be "putid"
When viewed through a critical lens,
Your axioms completely confuted
By grammar and sense,—

Yet O! till the Pedagogues' Diet
(Determined distinctly to speak)
Prohibits with terrible fiat
The teaching of Latin and Greek,
Till then we will humbly respect your
Contempt for the Probably True,
And climb to the heights of Conjecture,
Great Germans, with you!

CANTICUM BRUMALE.

Olim patriarcha Noe
questus est diluvio e
pleno, 'iam est satis, ohe!'

cum cedente bruma veri
campi fiunt lacus meri,
nobis quoque licet queri.

ambulare super prata
liquescenti nive strata
res est plane condemnata.

huc et illuc lapso, nuto,
nunquam gressu vado tuto,
nunc in nive, nunc in luto.

remex crudo pastus bove
sedet segnis, invitove
frustra temptat flumen Iove:

namque rivum videt qualem
nautae dicunt esse salem
juxta polum Borealem.

sponte quaerit vir Tutores:
legit—contra suetos mores—
Literas Humaniores,—

namque quando cui nos demus
verum opus non habemus,
iure nugas exercemus!

DISENCHANTED.

THEY told me of the August calm
  Of Oxford in the Long Vacation,
How rarely plies th' infrequent tram
  'Twixt Cowley and the Railway Station;
How Undergraduates are gone
  Or peaks to climb or moors to shoot on
And none remains but here a Don
  And there a speculative Teuton:

How in the Parks you seldom see
  The terminal perambulator;
How tradesmen close at half-past three,
  And silence broods o'er Alma Mater.
Ah me! 'twas all a baseless dream;
  One thing they quite forgot to mention—
The recently developed scheme
  Of University Extension.

They told me Oxford in the Long
  A place of solitude and peace is:
They told me so—they told me wrong;
For every train imports a throng
  Of sisters, cousins, aunts, and nieces,
Who crowd the streets, who storm the Schools,
  With love of Lectures still unsated;
They're subject to no kind of rules,
  And can't be proctorised or gated.

'Neath auspices majestical,
  Their guide some Principal or Warden,
From morn to eve they throng the Hall,
  And all day long they "do" the Garden.
Upon one's own peculiar haunts
  They rudely pry—O times, O manners!
They strum the Pirates of Penzance
  On Undergraduates' pianners.

The Bursar entertains about
  A score of feminine relations,
Whilst I invoke my absent scout,
  And hope in vain my humble rations.
If this be Oxford in the Vac.,
  When all her sons afar are scattered,
If this be peace,—then give me back
  The Torpid wine, the tea-tray battered!

SPRING.

Now the feathery tribes
Sing their annual lay,
(As the poet describes)
On the usual "spray,"
And the easterly zephyrs we're used to proclaim the dominion of May.

All the music of spring—
It is with us anew!
The thrushes that sing
And the ring-doves that coo—
And the boys who endeavour to sell us the *Star* and the *Oxford Review*.

Now the meadows among,
Whither golfers resort,—
Where the grass is as long
As their tempers are short,—
The language they use to their caddies is such as I cannot report.

Now the man on the bank
With assurance dilates
On the style that is "rank"
And the varying weights
Of the persons condemned by misfortune to row in their several Eights.

And Lectures we vote
To be hollow and vain,
And the Don has a note
From the Man to explain
That the whole of his female relations come up by the twelve o'clock train:

But the coming of Greats
Casts a sensible chill
On the wretch who collates
His "Republic" and "Mill";
And he dreams of the τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι, and wakes to discourse of the Will.

P. VERGILI MARONIS FRAGMENTUM NUPER REPERTUM.

VENIT hiems; multosque etiam venientia testes
Dant Parvisa sui. Qui vix semel hebdomadali
Tempore Tutoris quaerebat limina, nunc it
Terque quaterque die, poscitque et ab hoste doceri,
Mendosas prosas ululatorumque feraces
Ille quidem referens. Adeo nova vertitur illi
Pagina; non repetit curandis (scilicet) urbem
Dentibus infelix; Nonas celebrare Novembres
Jam timet et miseris supponere civibus ignem.
Invigilat noctu libris; tum rite togatus
Templum mane petit (faciem stupet inscius ante
Janitor); ut, durum quamvis patiatur aratrum,
Termine, te saltem servet, placeatque Decano.
Mox hunc scribentem Schola Magna Australis habebit,
Adjectiva, nefas! (res est nec digna magistros
Fallere nec facilis) latebris suffixa galeri
Cum substantivis—lateant si forte—legentem.
(Incassum—namque omnibus est academica vestis—
Proprocurator complerier agmine denso
Strata videt; maestusque Via palatur in Alta,
Multa gemens, cistamque nequit ditare sequendo).
Accipe nunc artes. Memini, qui saepe negatum
Saepe tamen rursus petiit Testamur; at illum
Ad fluvium comites percussaque robore tergi

Torpidi ad alterius cogebat transtra juventus;
Sed puer Eucliden nec non Pronomina Graeca
Adfixit lintri, medioque legebat in amne,
Oppositum observans humerum librumque vicissim.
Sic multas hiemes et sic vicesima vidit
Parvisa, Edmundi vivens contentus in Aula.
Sunt qui praetereant; est, qui patietur aratrum.
Sed vos, O juvenes, quos praeteriisse vetabit
Ferreus et viva damnârit voce magister—
Hospitium si dura negant Collegia, si vos
Excipit e Christi depulsos Corpore Turrell—
Ne tamen in medio mergat furor aegra fluento
Corpora, neu famulis sectas obtendite fauces;
Spes maneat! veniet lustris labentibus annus,
Cum vos Graecorum per mille pericla chororum
Perque mathematicos ducet Fortuna papyros;
Tunc aliquis comitum, longis venerabilis annis,
Ibit, et aequaevi referet Testamur amici.

5.—Ululatorum. Quid est ululator? Vereor, ut explicari possit.—SERV. Fuit quidam Romae C. Licinius Ululator, qui semper accusativos cum nominativis, genitivos autem cum dativis congruentes scribebat. Hoc modo igitur scribere, est ululatores facere.—SCHOL. Haec est ridicula interpretatio.—HEYNE.

25.—Torpidi Alterius, hoc est, secundi. De Torpido autem ita scriptum inveni apud Senecam (De Corruptione Morum). Torpida nunc vocitant mutato nomine Toggers; Proque Rudimentis dicunt (O Tempora!) Rudders . . . . .

LINES SUGGESTED BY A STONE-SAW.

"The silent groves of Academe"—
In ages which our fathers knew,
When trams were yet an airy dream,
Perhaps the epithet was true:
Ere members of St. John's and New
Had heard the peacock's doleful scream,
The phrase was applicable to
The ancient groves of Academe.

Now, when Salvation's rank and file
Emerge from out their native slum,
Their retrogressive chief the while
Performing on his sacred drum,—
When men who've passed their latest school,
Or traction engines worked by steam,
Disturb the rest that still should rule
The silent groves of Academe,—

When little boys who sell the "Star,"
And saws that split the strident stone,
Combine his spirit's peace to mar
Who cons his unattractive Bohn,—
The student in his cloistered shade
Pursues in vain some lofty theme,
When sights and sounds like these invade
The silent groves of Academe.

Still must I hear, at half-past five,
The hooter's hoot that greets the morn;
Still, as the shades of night arrive,
The Torpid-man's exultant horn:
For every various form of din
From Carfax Church to Cherwell's stream
Is heard continually in
The silent groves of Academe.

LINES ON A MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE.

I WISH I knew geography—for that would tell me why
'Twixt New South Wales and Paddington you needs must pass the High!
Of course I know the fact is so: 'tis singular, but then
Veracity is still the mark of literary men.

All in the High a Yankee man I happened for to find:
He'd come from the Antipodes, and left his purse behind:
And here by his embarrassments compelled be was to stay
('Twixt New South Wales and London town 'tis all upon the way.)

His simple tale affected me: 'twas more than I could bear:
I brought him to my humble cot and entertained him there.
And "Books!" he cried, while gazing on my well-assorted shelf,
"I've written some immortal works—anonymous—myself!

"Full well I know the authors of those venerable tomes—
Yes, there's Nathaniel Hawthorne, and there is Wendell Holmes!
My literary relatives I number by the score:
Mark Twain 's my cousin twice removed, by far Missouri's shore."

He spoke of many famous men, and all by Christian names—
Yes, Howells he called William D., and Russell Lowell, James:
His kinsmen and acquaintances were all in Culture's van;
I do not think I ever met a more related man.

"But what's the use of all that crowd," the Transatlantic said,
"When I am bound to catch the cars, and ain't got nary red?
Stranger, I guess with Caius C. Maecenas you'll be known
If you will just oblige me with a temporary loan."
I can't resist celebrity—I lent him shillings ten,
That impecunious relative of literary men:
And when he comes to pay it back, no doubt he'll tell me why
From New South Wales to Paddington the shortest way's the High.

A SONG OF THE SCHOOLS.

WHENE'ER I see those sculptured Three, above the New Schools' gate,
Whose stony forms a heart of stone too aptly indicate,
It minds me, as I gaze upon those cold, unfeeling men,
How often I've been ploughed before, and oft shall be again;
And O! that Undergraduate, receiving his degree—
They give that Undergraduate what ne'er they'll give to me!

Before my locks were streaked with gray, and seamed with care my brow,
I got through Mods. in seven tries—I often wonder how—
But Greats, alas! I cannot pass; for were my mind a sieve, I
Could just about as well retain the narrative of Livy.
They tell me where Saguntum was: I hear, but I forget—
I can't distinguish Hamilcar from Hasdrubal as yet!
They say my Aristotle's "weak," and always mark "N.S." on
My papers when I try to prove that virtue is a μέσον:
And when I bring the Clerk a bob, he simply says in answer,
"What! give you a testamur, Sir! I much regret I can't, Sir."

Full proudly struts the Honourman, with look serene and high;
Yet O! although his task is hard, he's better off than I!
He's specialised on all that's known, and also much that's not:
He knows far more than Liddell, and quite as much as Scott:
He uses philosophic terms so long 'tis hard to spell 'em,
Has all M-c-n's most recent tips, and theories from P-lh-m;
But can the boastful Honourman—can P-lh-m or M-c-n know
The various individuals who bore the name of Hanno?
No—much more difficult his task, superior far his art,
Who buys a crib at second-hand, and learns that crib by heart!

Still, ere I quite give up the game, and migrate hence to Durham
(For if examiners have hearts, some pity sure must stir 'em)
I'll try another 'bout with Fate—one last and desperate venture—
This time, perhaps, will victory crown my limp dejected trencher:
Then, proud as any ancient Greek who won the Isthmian parsley,
I'll sign myself

R. SNOOKS, B.A., ex Aul. Magistri Charsley.

MISERERE SVFFRAGATORIS. (1885.)

INCIPIT DIALOGVS MAGISTRI ARTIVM ATQVE VNDERGRADVATI QVORVM HIC PRIOR ITA LOQUITVR:

NUNC Parvisa canamus: amant Parvisa Camenae.
ille ego, qui triplici signatam nomine chartam
iamdudum repeto—nec me labor ille iuvabat—
en, ego praeterii: nil mi gravis ante nocebat
algebra, grammaticoque carent errore papyri.
nec scripsisse satis: Vice Cancellarius ipse
haud facilem esse viam voluit, vivaque rogari
voce iubet pueros. Vidi, qui nota rogati
obstipuere tamen, meliusve tacenda loquuntur.
ipse nihil timui—quid enim rationis egerem,
sede sedens solita?—nec non cum laude recessi.

TVM ILLE RESPONDEBIT ET DICET:

Ergo ne pete plura: sit hic tibi finis honorum:
crede mihi, satis est unum Testamur habere.
fortunate puer, tua si modo commoda noris,
quod tibi iudicium suffragia rursus ademit
iam data: quod curvo terret Moderator aratro,
nec cepisse gradum, necdum licet esse magistro.
te non ulla movet facundia municipalis
trinave cum propria promittens iugera vacca
ambitus exercet: te non ciet Hebdomadale

concilium, duplicique vocat revocatque flagello,
res quaecunque agitur:—qua sint ratione legendi
Procuratores: an sit scribenda Latine
prosa mathematicos puero qui quaerit honores:
nec tua Palgravius nec Sacri Carminis auctor
quarto quoque die poscit suffragia Dixon.

EXPLICIT DIALOGVS.

DOCTRINAE SEDES.

When Pleasure rules in Learning's realm
  With Heads of Houses to escort her,
And Youth directs an errant helm
  In "Shorts" that every year grow shorter:
When Scholars "have their People up,"
  (A plea that everything excuses)
And quaff the gay convivial cup
  Where once they wooed the classic Muses:

When men who used to come at nine
  Are "indisposed" (a known condition),
And Brown has several aunts to dine,
  And cannot do his composition:
When Tomkins—once a studious lad—
  "Desires most humbly to express a
Sincere regret he has not had
  Time to complete his weekly essay";

When Lecturers have lost their use,
  Because the youth they idly prate to
Has other things whereon to muse
  Than mere Thucydides or Plato—
(You think, perhaps, he's taking notes?
  Mistaken dream! too well I know he
Is speculating on the boats,
  Or thinking of a rhyme to Chloe):—

Then seek with me some calmer scene,
  Where wines are hushed, where banjoes mute are;
There—careless though they burn the Dean
  And immolate the Senior Tutor—
We'll muse in solitude, until
  June and the Long once more disbands 'em;
Then, William, pay my washing bill,
  And call at once my usual hansom.

FOOTBALL AND ROWING—AN ECLOGUE.

MELIBŒUS. CORYDON.

Mel.—Nay, tempt me not, my Corydon; I tell you once again
That football is a game beneath the dignity of men.
Time was, I chased the bounding ball athwart the meadows green—
Before I read what critics said, within the *Magazine.*
Degrading sport! at which, indeed, I used to shine at school;
Alas! I knew no better then, and was, in fact, a fool;
Of all the spectacles on earth, I know no sight that's sadder
Than thirty men pursuing of a mere inflated bladder.
Were I to play at games like this, when nearly in my twenties,
'Twould argue me behind my age, and *parum compos mentis.*
'Tis "semi-gladiatorial" too—a thing which I abhor—
At least that's what the papers say, and likewise Dr. Warre—
And so I've donned my boating-coat, and down to row I'm going,
For oarsmen swear (they often do) there's no such sport as rowing.

Coryd.—Ah, hapless youth! Why, don't you know what
countless ills await
The man who strives to figure in a Torpid or an
Eight?
Learn, then, that such (you'll find it all in last week's
Magazine)
Of individuality have less than a machine;
"Two" looks at stroke, and bow at "Three," and
imitates him stiffly,
And once embarked, you can't get out between the
Barge and Iffley.
The chops and steaks on which you dine are (like
your person) raw;
You can't devote your mind to Greats, or History, or
Law—
For when they're rowing in an Eight, I'm told that
gentlemen
Are comatose at half-past eight, and sent to bed at
ten!

Mel.—Alas! 'Tis clear, such sports as these can ne'er
have been designed
To satisfy a person of a cultivated mind.
Since both alike a mark present for journalistic sneers,
Rowing and football I'll forswear, and join the
Volunteers!

HEPHAESTUS IN OXFORD.

Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοῖο βίην κλυτὸς ἀμφιγυήεις
ἔνθα δύω νῆας κοῦροι ἔριδα προφέροντες
ὦκα προήρεσσον· πίσυρας δ'ἐνέθηκεν ἑκάστῃ·
ἐξῆς δ'ἐζόμενοι κρατερὸν ῥόον ὦσαν ἐρετμοῖς
τέρματος ἱέμενοι, ῥινοὶ δ' ὑπένερθεν ἔτριφθεν.
λαοὶ δ' ὡς ὅτε κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
θρῶσκον ἐπασσύτεροι ποταμῷ παρὰ δινήεντι,
θάρσυνον δ' ἑτάρους, ἐπὶ δ' ἴαχον ἀμφοτέροισι
θεσπεσίῳ ὁμάδῳ· ἑτέροισι δὲ φαίνετο νίκη.
Ἐν δ'ἐτίθει μεγάλοιο πυρὸς σέλας· ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοί
ὀρχηθμῷ τέρποντ' ἐρικύδεος εἵνεκα νίκης.
οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν πόσιος καὶ ἐδήτυος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο
νυκτός ἔπειτ' ὠρχεῦντο μέσῳ περικάλλεος αὐλῆς,
τυκτῷ ἔνι δαπέδῳ, περὶ δὲ φρένας ἤλυθεν οἶνος,
ἐν πυρὶ βάλλοντες κτῆσιν μέγαλ' ἤλιθα πολλήν
μὰψ, ἄταρ οὐ κατὰ κόσμον· ἔπειτα δέ τ' ἔνθορον αὐτοί.
τοὺς δ' ἄρα νισσομένους ἀπ' ἀμύμονος ὀρχηθμοῖο
πρώκτωρ δέγμενος ἦστο, πέλωρ ἀθεμίστια εἰδώς,
παὰρ ὁδῷ ἐν σκοπιῇ, ὅθι περ νίσσεσθαι ἔμελλον
[οὐκ οἷος· ἅμα τῷ γε κύνες πόδας ἀργοὶ ἕποντο].
ὣς ὁ μὲν ἐσκοπίαζ', οἱ δ' ἤλυθον ἀφραδίῃσιν·
δὴ τότ' ἐπειτ' ἐπόρουσε, γένος δ' ἐρέεινεν ἑκάστου,
θωὴν δ' αὖτ' ἐπέθηχ'· οἱ δ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντες ἔτινον·
ἄλλοι δ' ἄλλοσ' ἔφευγον ἀνὰ τρηχεῖαν ἀταρπόν.

NUNQUAM DIREXIT BRACHIA CONTRA.

WHEN copies of the *Magazine*,
In Bodley's dark recesses,
Provide the future Stubbs or Green
With themes for learned guesses:
When scholars, airing sapient doubts,
And antiquarians zealous
Write monographs to prove that Scouts
Were not the same as Fellows,—

Posterity the day may see
(Though daring the conjecture)
When Readers read to more than three
And e'en Professors lecture:
When Youth to town no longer goes
To cure its suffering molars,
And does, unasked, its Latin Prose,
And "keeps" spontaneous "Rollers"!

Then woman, long oppressed in vain,
Will claim her proper station,
And take degrees within the An-
cient House of Congregation:
And making free with rights which we—
Not unreluctant—give her,
St. Hugh's will rule the History School,
And Somerville the river.

And that (an M.A. said) is why
  I recognize my mission
To realize that πάντα ῥεῖ
  And all is mere Transition:
And why, when Council plans reforms,
  The cause on which they base it
I do not ask, nor wish to know,
But take my cap and gown and go
  And vote a cordial Placet.

LOVE AND GOLF.

HEAR me swearing, fairest Phyllis!
—Golfers all know how to swear—
Though, of course, your presence still is
Most attractive everywhere,
Links were ne'er designed for lovers:
Do not, Phyllis, deem me rude,
When I hint that man discovers
Charms at times in solitude.

Lips like yours should never utter
Ugly words that golfers speak—
"Dormy," "stimy," "mashy," "putter,"
"Driver," "brassy," "bunker," "cleek"!
Sooner read—though Cultured Woman
Is a thing I hate and shun—
Horace, that distinguished Roman,
Than Horatius Hutchinson.

Though, in hours of deep dejection,
When the disappointing ball
Takes, if hit, the wrong direction,
Sometimes can't be hit at all,—
Though whate'er the golfer says is
Justified by reason due,
Still I hold his Saxon phrases
Most unsuitable for you.

Tennis be your sole endeavour
If you must aspire to fame!
But at golf—believe me, never
Can you hope to play the game.
There, your "swing" but courts the scoffer,
Boors and clowns your "driving" mock;
Fate, who made the clown a golfer,
Meant you, Phyllis! for a "crock."

Meet me then by lawn or river,
Meet me then at routs or rinks,
Meet me where the moonbeams quiver,
Anywhere—but on the links!
Thus of you I'll fondly ponder
O'er the green where'er I roam,
(Absence makes the heart grow fonder),
Only, Phyllis, stay at home!

PROCTORS IN PROCESSION. (1891.)

Qui contemptu pressus est, ecce fit sublimis,
quique summus fuerat, mixtus est cum imis:
anne vos iniurias perferetis tales,
Guardiani, Praesides, atque Principales?

olim in Ecclesiam Universitatis
praecedebant maximae viri dignitatis:
ibant cum Doctoribus Capita Domorum
in Doctorum cathedras, sicut est decorum:

primus venit omnium Bromi de sacello
Vice Cancellarius, ductus a bedello:
Procurator pone tum, Praeses ibat ante
(tintinnabulario rite tintinnante).

ordo nunc euntium notus exolescit,
deprimuntur Capita, Procurator crescit,
nunc (velut petorritis si trahantur equi)
idem hic praegreditur qui solebat sequi!

Caput Domus quodlibet est permagnus homo,
nihil potest propria exturbare domo:
Procurator annua tantum habet iura,
utque vere dixerim, servus est natura.

alter fiet—nihil est quare metuatis—
unus e Collegio Universitatis:
neu collega terreat: brevi fiet iste
mera pars Collegii Divi Jo. Baptistae.

vivunt illi regulas persequendo stultas,
propter parva crimina imponendo multas:
sunt interdum utiles, sed plerumque pestis:
vos cum illis nulla re comparandi estis.

Sive vos in praelio trucidabit Freeman,
—sanguis certe Praesidum bonae legis semen,—
morte contumelias peius ferre tales,
Guardiani, Praesides, atque Principales!

ODE TO THE TEMPORARY BRIDGE AT OSNEY.

PROUD monument of British enterprise!
  Stately highway of Commerce! thou art old:
Since with enraptured gaze we saw thee rise
  Three winters o'er thy perilous planks have rolled,
Each with its load of carriages and carts:
Freshmen, who saw thy birth, are Bachelors of Arts.

Majestic arch, that spans the Isis' flow,
  Fraught with the memory of our lives imperilled,
We could not hope to keep thee—thou must go.
  Yet shall no bard in Chronicle or Herald,
No civic Muse, deplore thee? none of all
Who paid augmented rates to rear thee, mourn thy fall?

Thou art of schemes municipal the symbol,
  As crazy, and as tortuous. Fare thee well!
Not long o'er thee shall Undergraduates nimble
  Evade the Proctor and his bulldogs fell:
Business and Pleasure to their old forgotten
Path will return again, and leave thy timbers rotten.

Perchance some Alderman, or Member of
  The Local Board,—his shallop softly mooring,—
Beside thy site contemplative will rove
  And weep awhile thy glories unenduring:
And unimpeded by thy barring wood
Dead cats and dogs shall float adown the central flood.

CAVENDISH: AN ODE.

I.

AND can it be? is Cambridge too
  To Ignorance a slave?
Can dark Reaction's tide imbrue
  The Cam's progressive wave?
I used to think that every fad,
That every scheme and purpose mad
  In Education's sphere,
A Kindergarten system, or
A theory of Mr. St—rr,
  Could find expansion here!

II.

As golfers, doomed by fortune harsh
To seek the flats of Cowley Marsh,
Still turn a wistful eye upon
The verdant slopes of Headington,
So Cavendish—a pigmy race—
  Laments th' obnoxious rule
Which closes that peculiar place,
  The Cambridge Infant School.

How oft—when privileged to view
  Amid some rural scene
Her freshmen, walking two and two,
  Escorted by the Dean—
How oft her halls I seemed to see,
Where, dandled on the Master's knee,
  They learn their ὁ, ἡ, τό,
And little Pollmen lisp with glee
  About their Little-go!
Not there (I thought) the studious boy
Is taught to fill, with lawless joy,
  The gay nocturnal cup:
At half-past eight—or so 'tis said—
The Tutor sends his men to bed,
  And comes to tuck them up!
No "gates" or fines pollute the air:
No scholarships or prizes there
  Reward successful cram;
But Vice is spanked (though not too hard),
And Virtue finds its due reward
  In extra helps of jam.

III.

Such was the scene: but human bliss
  Is bound, alas! to pass away:
And Cavendish no longer is,
  Because she did not pay.

An exiled crew, her students wend—
  Their corals lost, their rattles broke—
For Cavendish has found an end
  (As usual) in smoke:
And once again on history's page
  Is chronicled the truth—
Youth cannot live with crabbed Age,
  Nor crabbed Age with Youth.

A MEDITATION ON METRE.

O IS 'T not hard that every bard
  Who seeks to shine in letters,
Must still be bound by rules of sound,
  And simply dance in fetters?
Would we had lived in ancient times,
  When genius found expansion,
When no one had to hunt for rhymes
  Nor mind the laws of scansion!

They did not go to public schools
  To learn to make a poem,
Nor knew their Quantitative Rules
  As we've been taught to know 'em:
Because—despite what scholars write
  And pedantry rehearses—
Reflection shows that Pindar's prose,
  And only looks like verses.

Yet still from slips in ancient song
  We frame consistent uses,
And when they make their lines too long
  We call it Anacrusis:
When Sappho strays from Reason's ways,
  With reverence still we treat her,
Although she pens what is not sense,
  And really can't be metre.

Whene'er some celebrated man
  The critic's ear perplexes
By writing lines that will not scan,
  'Tis Hypercatalexis,—
Should you or I this method try
  To mould our scansion after,
'Twould move, one fears, our friends to tears,
  And stir our foes to laughter!

And so, when Afric's darkest States
  Attain their culture's crowning,
And dusky students read for Greats
  Their Tennyson and Browning,—
Whene'er the critic finds a flaw
  Which now our work disfigures,
He'll make that flaw a general law
  For young poetic niggers!

A REJECTED NEWDIGATE.

O SICILY! upon whose torrid shores
Here Scylla lurks and there Charybdis roars:
Where great Empedocles, that ardent soul,
Leapt into Etna and was roasted whole:
O smiling vales! and O tremendous heights!
Trod by the heroes of a hundred fights,
Now British tars, and then Athenian seamen,
Here Archimedes, there Professor Freeman!
'Twas evening: when in Enna's flowery vale
Persephone was plucking galingale,
And various other flowers less known to us
Than to translators of Theocritus.
Dis marked the damsel from the shades below
(Dis was the cause of all dis tale of woe):
And as with energy that naught appals
The Eight of Jesus chases Teddy Hall's,
As the grim bandit on the Thracian crag
Collars the lonely tourist's Gladstone bag,—
Dis seized the maid and bore her off dismayed
To share his kingdom in th' infernal shade.
Was it the hooting of the skyey owl?
Or rose from earth that melancholy howl?
Demeter marked the absence of her daughter,
And on the mountains and the plains she sought her:
All day she cried (in accents fit to deafen ye)
Persephone! *Persephone!!* PERSEPHONE!!!"

O who can paint a mother's speechless woe?
Not I, for one: mere narrative's *de trop*.
Though the detectives both of Rome and Sparta
Were furnished with descriptions of her daughter,
Though she repaired to various distant climes,
And put advertisements within the *Times*,
In vain she questioned persons far and near:
She Asked a P'liceman—nothing could she hear:
And when she asked the men of Syracuse
"Where is she? where?" 'twas not the smallest use:
For though they speak Italian, you're aware,
None made response, nor "Ecco" answered "Where?"
Meanwhile Persephone, as schoolboys know,
Was ruling sadly in the shades below,
Where Acheron and Phlegethon and Styx
Their floods tremendous with Cocytus mix,
Where—but the details, and they're far from scanty,
You'll find described in Lemprière, or in Dante.
Some like the place: Persephone did not:
'Twas badly lighted, and 'twas rather hot:
Amusements slow—she really could not feel
A spark of interest in Ixion's wheel:
Though Pluto did his best to cheer his wife,
What she complained of was the want of life.
"Bear me," she cried, "O bear me back again
To Enna (loveliest village of the plain),
Where I was wont in girlhood's happy hours
(Myself a fairer flower) to gather flowers!"

Jove heard her prayer: and 'twas arranged that she
Should make an annual trip to Sicily.
So Britain's invalids (by doctors' stern behests)
Perplexed by maladies of throats or chests,
Fly from the hurricanes of winter hoar
To Cannes' retreat or Nice's genial shore:
Yet, when the spring asserts her genial reign,
So Britain's invalids come home again.
Thus Undergraduates, a studious race
(Their country's pride, and Oxford's chiefest grace),
Wearied with Plato and with Latin Prose,
Enjoy through half the year a well-deserved repose.

* * * * * * *

This of thy tale, Persephone! the abstract is and pith:
Some say it's allegorical, and some a Solar Myth.
I dote on hoar Antiquity, and love its legends old,—
But yet I can't believe much more than half of what
I'm told.

ALARIC: A PRIZE POEM.

Ālărĭcus, vel Ălārĭcus, vel Ălārĭcus audit?
non equidem curo: nec res flocci est facienda:
nomine nam quoquo rex est ferus ille vocandus
arma virumque cano, Vice-Cancellarius ipse
quem cecinisse jubet, recitareque Sheldoniano,
si placet hoc Dominis Doctoribus atque Magistris.
annuite O Musae coeptis seniorque canenti
Procurator ades! dabit et deus his quoque finem.
non equidem celebrare Alarici ingentia facta
cuncta queo, aut cupio: partim, quod nescio: partim
quod narrat scriptor doctissimus omnia Gibbon,
qui fuit, ut perhibent, Academiae hujus alumnus.
O fortunati qui antiquam quique modernam
Historiam callent, Xenophontem Thucydidemque,
Freeman, Stubbs, Tacitum, nec non Livium Patavinum!
illis Finales scribendo quaerere Honores
nec frustra quaesîsse licet.
non Parvisa timent nec Preliminaria Iura:
et mox Tutores fiunt vel Praelectores,
vel socii, quo nil praeclarius, officiales.

Urbs antiqua fuit, quae quondam Roma vocata est:
nunc quoque, ni fallor, vocitatur nomine eodem.
salve magna virum genetrix! hic nascitur olim
Scipiades, fulmen belli, Carthaginis horror,
Caesarque, et Gracchi de seditione querentes,
Augustusque senex, et Cocles, et Caracalla,

Caiusque, et Balbus qui muros aedificabat,
multi praeterea quos nunc describere longum est,
Tullius et Cicero patriae roburque paterque,
Antoni gladios potuit qui spernere: sed non
sprevisset gladios Alarici, si vixisset.
impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer
per montes, per tela citus ruit: Hectoris instar
maxima rupit Gatlingis torpedinibusque
moenia.
ac veluti quam cum confectis ebria bumpis
clamorem caelo tollit studiosa juventus,
et media, infandum! faciunt incendia quadra
nec trepidant ipsum superimposuisse Decanum:
haud aliter . . . . . .

THE NEW DOCTORS.

B.D. Venerabilis. (Epitaph.)
Mutato nomine D.D. (HORACE.)

THE Scholar's ploughed for his degree if wanting in Latinity,
The Science man is forced to pass a terminal Prelim.:
But he who'd be a Bachelor or Doctor of Divinity
Will find that such impediments were never meant for him.

The Man's supposed to know about th' Athenian Hegemony,
The Law of Real Property, the Structure of the Flea:
The Don's excused from everything (*contradicente nemine*)—
Except, of course, the payment of the statutable fee.

Should I to Convocation go and there those ancient nobs tackle,
And point out all the pitfalls which they set about my way,
And ask to be delivered from a single little obstacle
Of all that now prevent me from attaining a B.A.,—

Whate'er the tale of hindrances my progress that encumber is,
The Registrar would simply laugh—the Senior Proctor frown—

They'd quote to me Stat. ix. Tit. Cap.—*I* don't know
what the number is—
They'd say 'twas quite impossible: perhaps they'd send
me down.

And yet 'tis hard that hapless men should have to read
Thucydides,
And have their life a burden made by all the things
they're taught,
When Convocation's managers associate to rid D.D.'s
Of reading disputations as the Statutes say they ought.

When Undergrads admitted are to share the *jus suffragii*
(A thing Commissions contemplate, as shortly will be
shown),
We'll stop these vile malpractices which now with grief
and rage I eye,
We'll make them read their thesises, and see that
they're their own!

Till then, O Dons, who doubt about your Greek and
your Latinity,
Yet want to wear a Doctor's gown as men of mark
should do,
You need but ask—they'll let you off your thesis on
Divinity:
The Statutes are for common men, but are not meant
for you.

ΟΙΗ ΠΕΡ ΦΥΛΛΩΝ.

October's leaves are sere and wan;
And Freshmen each succeeding year
Are, like the leaves, less verdant than
They were.

Time was, they paced the Broad or High
In cap and gown, with sober mien,
Their only wish to gratify
The Dean:

But now they seek the social glass,
The bonfire and the midnight feast:
And e'en describe their Tutor as
A Beast.

Once, when that Tutor strove to show
How (though it's sometimes hard to see)
There *is* a difference 'twixt *οὐ*
And *μή*,

They gazed with simple wonder at
The treasures of his hoarded lore,
Nor hinted that they'd "heard all *that*
Before."

They wore a cap hind part before,
A gown of quaint domestic cut:
They served the general public for
A butt.

On them the casual jester tried
(Nor failed) his old ancestral jokes:
They nightly placed their boots outside
Their oaks.

No youths but recently from school
Could hope to ape the senior man:
But now—I state a general rule—
They can:

And it's comparatively rare
For Fourth-year men, though old and gray,
To have as much of *savoir faire*
As they.

For still among the myriad throng
Who yearly tread Oxonia's stones,
Monotony extends her sway,
And Smith grows liker every day
To Jones.

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